

SCOTIA ILLUSTRATA, sive Prodomus
Historiæ naturalis, &c. Authore Roberto Sibbal-
do M. D. Equite Aurato, Medico & Geographo
Regio, & Regii Medicorum Collegii apud Edin-
burgum Socio. Edinburgi in fol. 1684.

BEfore we give an account of the *book* it self, these few things ought to be premised concerning the *Nuntius Scoto-Britannus* which is prefixed by the *Author*, to this *Prodromus* and is an account of the *Atlas Scoticus* by him undertaken. It contains both the reason of his undertaking that great work, which, besides his *Majesties* express command, was the alteration of the *country* since the *Antients*, and the imperfect relations the Ignorance or partiality of the *Moderns* have given ; as also the *series* or method of the whole *work* it self, according to its *books* and *chapters* ; which is done chiefly to invite those who can any way contribute to so vast an undertaking, to communicate what they have in order to it. For the direction of which he has added his *Quære's*, as also a *catalogue* of the *books* he already has, both in *Print* and *Manuscript*, and of those he has heard of and cannot get, together with the *Geographical tables* which are not in *Bleau*, and are curiously drawn by Mr. *John Adair*.

In the *Prodromus* he hath shewn himself worthy of what he enjoys in being the *Kings Geographer* and *Physician* there, but in this acts chiefly as the latter ; for after he has discoursed of *Britain* in general, as to its Name, Limits, Dimensions and Figure, he does the same for *Scotland* ; the *length* of which he computes to be 380. *English* miles, the *breadth* 190, though it is so often invaded by the Sea, that scarce any house in all *Scotland* is above twenty Leagues from *Salt water*, the longest day he makes to be 18. hours 25. min. though for two months, especially

ally towards the *Orcades*, the Sun beams are so plain all night, that it is easy to write and read by them. The *Antipodes* to *Scotland* he assigns in the *Terra Australis* near the *Magellanick Streights*, and looks upon that to be the truest division of the Country, by which it is divided into three *Peninsula's*. Hence he passes to the *Natural History*, beginning as nature herself does, with the four *Elements*. He finds no *burning Mountains*, but yet there are *Fields* which *Smoke* by day, and *Flame* by night, as also other *igneous impressions*. He tells us what sort of *Air* is best, what use or rather necessity we have of it, accounts for the *Spring* of it from its *Nitrosaline* parts; and because they are hardly one hour without *winds*, looks upon the *Scotch* air to be more pure and wholsome than the *English*, the *sweating sickness* never so much as invading their borders.

After having treated of *water's* being the *universal menstruum*, if not principle, defined and divided the *Sea*, and given us its properties of *Saltiness* and *motion*, he relates some various motions of the *Scotch Sea*; a particular *vortex* of which by the *Orcades*, sucks in whatsoever comes within its circle. The inhabitants fling in empty vessels, or bundles of straw, and so pass by without any danger, the *Sea* becoming plain as soon as it hath swallowed what was cast into it, which it again returns about a *mile* farther. He supposes the bottom of the *Sea* to consist as the *superficies* of the *Earth* does, of *Mountains* and *vallies*, *woods* and *mines*; whence *amber*, *ambergris*, and whatsoever substance else the *Sea* casts up, proceed.

Petrifying Fountains are found here, as also one that foretells *storms*, called the *routing well* near *Edinburgh*, by sending forth a great *noise* from that side of the *Fountain* which is opposite to the quarter whence the *Storm* is to come.

Mineral waters are frequent, but no *hot Springs*, the defect of which he supposes may be supplied by the external use of the water of *Moffet*, and the *bitumen* of *St. Katharines*

rines well, commonly called the *oily well*. And having treated of the conveniency of its being *Mountainous*, of its *moods*, and *mines*, from those of *Gold* down to *Coals*, he writes of the arable lands, and *grains* of the country, which are much the same with ours, of which *grain* the fertility of some grounds returns 16. or 18 for one.

The *Inhabitants* in general he looks upon as qualified for *arts* and *arms*, by the roughness of their soil, and the purity of their air. The Antient *Scots* lived *ex tempore*, hunting supplying meat, and the rivers drink, their *manners* being answerable to their course of life. They took such particular care that their race should not be wasted by *hereditary diseases*, that they prohibited *Marriage* to all such who were any way distempered.

In the *second Book Diseases* in general are handled, especially those of the *Country*, some extraordinary cases of which he relates, as of strange *hysterical fits*, of a woman with a large *horn* above her right ear; as also of a *Dropie* of the right *Tuba Fallopiana*, out of whose leg came 44 *Scotch* pints of tinged water, with a great quantity of thick sediment at the bottom.

In his *Method of cure* he insists principally upon the convenience of *Medicines* of the growth of the *Country*, it being the *primitive practice*; and that he might promote as well as commend it, he has given an account of the *Medicines* which are produced there, and their *virtues*; and through all sorts of *Simples*, compares domestick with foreign ones, to shew how little need there is of *exotick Drugs*:

The *second part* is divided into 4 *books*; the first, after the various uses of *plants* considered with their definitions, parts and divisions, consists of a *Catalogue* of those *plants* which grow *wild*, to each of which is annexed the *characteristick* note taken from the *seed* and *fruit*, and the *virtues* of the *plant*, as to most is added the places where they are to be found. The *second book* describes *plants*
cultivated

cultivated in *Gardens*, with a discourse of *Gardens* in general, and a description of the *Physick Garden* at *Edinburgh*.

The *third Book* informs us of the *Animals* of *Scotland*, from *Men* down to *Insects*; where after a discourse of *animals* in general, and of the dignity of *Man*, he mentions some men more eminent, and gives an account of the *Life* and *Works* of Mr. *Alexander Bodius*, whose *Effigies* he has likewise given us, &c.

He has annexed a discourse about the *Scotch Geese*, the *Fable* of which he confutes by a description of the *Concha Analifera*, which is a perfect *animal* of it self, and allways remains so; and asserts that those *Geese* are known to build and lay Eggs, like other *Fowl*; though not in that *Country*, in which they only appear in *Autumn* and *Winter*. *Anatomy* also discovers in these all the *Vessels* for propagation of *Species* that are found in other *Birds*.

The last *Book* gives an account of the *Fossilia* and *Marina*, by which the *Country* seemes to be very well stored with *Earths*, *Metals*, *Stones* and *Minerals* of all kinds; the *Sea* is no less bountiful than the *land*; *Ambergrise*, *Succinum*, *Spermaceti*, &c. being the frequent effects of its Munificence. Several *Copper Plates* adorn and illustrate the books, all together make us impatiently expect the *Atlas* it self, the *Prodromus* of which is so satisfactory, that it seems to have prevented it.

O X F O R D,

Printed at the *THEATER*, and are to be sold by *Moses Pitt*, at the *Angel*, and *Samuel Smith*, at the *Princes Arms* in *St. Paul's Church-yard* LONDON. 1684.